

SOUTHWEST FISHERIES SCIENCE CENTER
THIRD QUARTER REPORT-FY 2003
For the period April 1, 2003 - June 30, 2003

SUBMITTED BY: Norman Bartoo, Acting Director, Fisheries Resources Division

Title of Accomplishment: Prepare offshore northern trawl sample bidding process for sardine in April 2003 and January 2004 and assemble incidental sample sets for comparison with historical and contemporary data.

Current Status: The statement of work and contract was submitted to WASC in late March after approval for funds was received. The contract was advertised and submission for bids ended June 5. Only one bid was received and final questions are being dealt with before award of the contract, which will hopefully occur by June 20. The vessel has done considerable work for other NMFS researchers and appears adequately suited to our needs.

Background Information: Since the resurgence in the sardine population that has occurred over the past two decades, the population now extends into its historical range northward to Vancouver Island, B.C. Canada. NMFS-SWFSC studies on spawning and adults has recently been extended from the southern California Bight during CalCOFI cruises northward to San Francisco. However, there is limited port sampling of nearshore samples taken by commercial fisheries in the Pacific Northwest and little is known of the offshore population. A survey to study spawning using the Continuous Underway Fish Egg Sampler (CUFES) and trawling to capture adults for life history studies is needed to determine the make up and contribution of this region to the overall population. A survey in July will study spawning adults off the Oregon and Washington coasts as well as collect eggs using the CUFES. January trawling will capture over-wintering sardines to compare their make up to those present during the summer.

Purpose of Activity: The purpose of this activity is to produce data for a stock assessment of the sardine population on the U.S. west coast over its entire range. This information will provide greater accuracy in population estimates used in FMP management decisions.

Description of Accomplishment and Significant Results: The survey contract is about to be awarded, the cruise plan has been designed by Dave Griffith (SWFSC), cruise personnel are being lined up and the first cruise is scheduled to take place beginning the second week of July, 2003.

Significance of Accomplishment: This will give us the first survey undertaken on the sardine population offshore of Oregon and Washington. Sardine studies from southern California indicate that the nearshore fish that make up the commercial fishery are primarily young fish, and spawning occurs primarily in more offshore waters by adults that have moved offshore. Similar information for the Pacific northwest is needed for accurate population estimates and management of the resource.

Problems: None yet.

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